AN

ESSAY

To Illuſtrate

Some of the moſt Neceſſary

ARTICLES

OF THE

CHRISTIAN FAITH.

— K

BATH:
Printed for W. FREDERICK, in *Orange-Grove.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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Some of the moſt neceſſary Articles

OF THE

Chriſtian FAITH.

ONE of the greateſt Excellencies of Human Nature is Knowledge; which we may, in many Inſtances, improve into Practice, and endeavour thereby to advance to a greater Degree of Perfection and Happineſs: It is neceſſary therefore to be rightly inform'd of the true Nature of Knowledge in general, with the different Degrees of it. The carrying this on regularly will require, that, in the firſt Place, there be laid down ſome *Definitions* and *Maxims*, from which we may proceed in a Way of Certainty: A Method us'd by Mathematicians, in the ſeveral Branches of that uſeful Science.

DEFINITIONS.

First Definition.

KNOWLEDGE in general, is the Perception of Agreement, or Diſagreement, and Repugnancy of any of our Ideas.

Second Definition.

INTUITIVE Knowledge is the Perception of Agreement or Diſagreement of two Ideas, immediately by themſelves, without the Intervention of another; in which the Mind is at no Pains of proving or examining, but perceives the Truth, as the Eye doth Light, by being directed towards it: This Degree of Certainty may be contain'd in Maxims, *which are ſelf-evident Truths.*

Third Definition.

DEMONSTRATIVE Knowledge is ſuch as is not produced by direct and immediate Intuition, but

but by the Intervention of other Ideas, or Propoſitions, which bring an undoubted Certainty with them, leaving no Doubt or Anxiety in the Mind: Without ſuch Certainty, the Evidence amounts to no more than probable Conjecture.

Fourth Definition.

KNOWLEDGE of Infinite Beings, is ſuch as is produced by Negative Propoſitions; which bring along with them a Certainty of the Truth of ſuch Negation, *but don't afford adequate Ideas of Infinity. Thus the Word Infinite, apply'd to any Being, implies only Negatively, that it is not Finite. If we ſpeak of a Line Infinitely extended, our Conceptions of it are Negative; we thereby only expreſs there is a Line which is not limitted in Length: Such a Conception is unqueſtionably True, and adequate ſuch Negation.*

Fifth Definition.

DEMONSTRATION, in the Language of the Schools, term'd a Priori, *is when the Pro-*

greſs of intervening Ideas is from the Cauſe *to the* Effect.

Sixth Definition.

DEMONSTRATION a Poſteriori, *is where the Progreſs of intervening Ideas is from the* Effect *to the* Cauſe. *Demonſtration of the Exiſtence of the firſt Cauſe, from the Neceſſity of Exiſtence in the firſt Cauſe, is, by ſome term'd Demonſtration a* Priori; *tho' the Train of Argumentation riſes from the Effect. This is only a Matter of Diſpute for ſpeculative* Metaphiſicians. *which may be eſteem'd a needleſs Diſpute; ſince that Train of Reaſoning, which leaves the Mind free from Doubt, is Demonſtration. In ſome Demonſtrations, the Train of intervening Ideas is longer than in others; but all Demonſtrations, in the* Concluſion, *are equally valuable, in Relation to the common Diſtinctions in the Degrees of Certainty: For no more is required than a full Aſſurance of the Truth of the Propoſition advanc'd.*

Seventh

Seventh Definition.

PERSON, *First, by Dr.* Samuel Clark, *it is ſaid to mean an intelligent Agent: Secondly, by ſome other Divines, no diſtinct Meaning is given, unleſs they mean Character: Therefore the Term,* Perſon, *being certainly uſed; That, together with the Terms,* Father, Son, *and* Spirit, *or* Holy Ghoſt, *muſt be left to be explain'd, by collecting Proofs from* Scripture.

MAXIMS.

FIRST, *Two Propoſitions, which are abſolutely contradictory, the one to the other, cannot poſſibly be both True.*

SECONDLY, *If two Propoſitions in Scripture, taking them both in a Literal Senſe, ſhould be contradictory; and one of them, in the moſt plain and obvious Senſe, an undoubted Truth, the other muſt be taken in a Senſe agreeable to that unqueſtioned Truth.*

THIRDLY,

THIRDLY, *From* Nothing, *no* Being *can proceed. Cou'd we poſſibly ſuppoſe there was a Duration, in which there was no Being, it wou'd be a neceſſary Conſequence there never cou'd be any Being.*

Poſtulate 1. THAT the Divine Authority of the Scriptures muſt be admitted.

Firſt Propoſition.

THERE is one Being *which did* eternally naturally *Exiſt as a firſt* Cauſe.

Demonſtration.

EVERY Thing that is, muſt either have its Exiſtence from ſome other Being, or it muſt be owing to its own Power that it hath its Exiſtence; for, by the third *Maxim*, from Nothing, no Being can proceed. Affirm this of A, which had Exiſtence from B. The ſame Thing muſt be ſaid of B, that either it had its Exiſtence from ſome other; or it muſt be owing to its own Power that it hath Exiſtence

iſtence. Thus we muſt proceed in a Train of Cauſes and Effects, 'till we come to a firſt Eternal Cauſe: It being evident, that the ſame Affirmation is true concerning every Being, in the Series: And ſuppoſe the Extent of the ſaid Series as far as the Nature of Things can poſſibly admit, we muſt arrive at one Being, which did Eternally Exiſt; for even an Eternal Series, which have been aſſerted by ſome, without any Signification or Language, muſt imply an eternal Exiſtence, which muſt be in ſome Being; which conſequently did Eternally Exiſt, and was a firſt Cauſe; at leaſt of that Train of Effects.

Second Propoſition.

EVERY Being *which did exiſt* Eternally, *without any* External Cauſe, *is a* neceſſary *exiſtent Being*; *and that which Eternally exiſted cou'd not have any* External Cauſe.

Demonſtration.

THAT there is an Eternal Firſt Cauſe, is already prov'd; ſince there was no precedent Being, there cou'd

cou'd be no external Cauſe of its Exiſtence; for Creation, Production, or Effect, do each imply that there was a Duration, when they were not, which is directly contrary to the Suppoſition of being Eternal; with this the generally receiv'd Definition of Demonſtration a *Priori* agrees, *viz.* That a Demonſtration from the Cauſe to the Effect, is an Argument from that which is prior to the Effect. Since then it has not its Exiſtence from any external Cauſe, our Imagination cannot paint to us the leaſt Idea of any Thing to which its Exiſtence cou'd be owing, but its own Power, its own neceſſary Exiſtence, or Neceſſity of Exiſtence, an Impoſſibility it ſhou'd ever have been otherwiſe. And hence we muſt certainly conclude, it did neceſſarily exiſt: Every Gradation we take of ſearching the Origin of any Being, in a Train of Cauſes and Effects, points out to us Neceſſity; ſhews us that every Being, but the Firſt, muſt be derived from ſome other, and fixes neceſſary Exiſtence in the firſt Cauſe.

Third Propoſition.

THERE can be but One Neceſſary *exiſtent Being*, One Firſt Cauſe.

Demonſtration:

IF there could be more than One, ſuppoſe *A, B, C, D, E,* either, they muſt have equal Powers, or unequal; if equal, a Conjunction of *Four* or *Three* wou'd make an Over-Ballance of Power, and a Poſſibility of deſtroying. But Neceſſary Exiſtence excludes all Poſſibility of Non-Exiſtence; therefore it excludes all Poſſibility of there being any more than *One Neceſſary* Exiſtent Being, any more than *One Firſt Cauſe.*

Firſt Corollary.

SINCE it is here demonſtrated that there is One Firſt Cauſe, and *only* One, He muſt be the Firſt Cauſe of all created Beings.

Second Corollary.

SINCE it is demonſtrated that there is One Firſt Cauſe of all Things, the Conſequence is, that He is infinitely Perfect, and that he is Supream Governour of the Univerſe, to be obeyed by all Creatures, *worſhipped* and adored by all Mankind, in a Manner ſuitable to his Perfections; ſo far as the Extent of our Rational Faculties and Abilities will admit, according to the Command and Directions given us by *Divine Revelation.*

Fourth Propoſition.

SUPREAM WORSHIP *is only to be paid to the One Supream Being, the Firſt Cauſe of all Things.*

Demonſtration.

THE Firſt of the Ten Commandments declares: *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but me.* This is confirm'd in the Goſpel of St. *Matthew* iv. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and Him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* This is the Voice of Nature, evidently

evidently deducible from the foregoing *Propoſitions*, and is an immutable Law, deliver'd to us in the moſt plain expreſs Terms.

Fifth Propoſition.

THE Scriptures *declare, That there were* Three different Manifeſtations, *in a* ſenſible *Manner, denoting*, Father, Son, *and* Spirit.

Demonſtration.

It is declared in the 3d Chapter of St. *Matthew*, in theſe Words: *And lo, the Heavens were open'd to him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon him: And lo, a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* The Voice was a Declaration from the *Father:* The Man *Chriſt Jeſus* was declared by the Voice to be the *Son:* And the *viſible Deſcent* denoted *Spirit.* Theſe were Objects of *Senſe:* The *Voice* was an Object of the Senſe of Hearing: The *Man* was ſeen, and convers'd with: As was likewiſe the *Deſcent* ſeen. All

Three therefore were *material Objects, manifeſted in a ſenſible Manner*, denoting *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*.

Sixth Propoſition.

WE are not required to pay Divine Supream Adoration *to any of theſe* Three Senſible Objects.

Demonſtration.

By the Fourth Propoſition it is prov'd, that *Supream Worſhip is only to be paid to One Supream Being*; to *One God, whom no Man hath ſeen*, nor *can ſee*, as is declared in *Scripture*. Therefore none of theſe ſenſible Objects, not even the *Voice*, denoting *Father*, is to be worſhipped with *Divine Adoration* and Invocation.

Seventh Propoſition.

THE Worſhip *which, in the Epiſtle to the* Hebrews, *is ſaid to be paid to the* Son, *(viz.* Let all the Angels of God worſhip him) *is to the* Divine Nature *in the* Son, *the* One God dwelling in Him.

De-

Demonſtration.

In the Scriptures, both the *Divine* and *Human* Nature of the *Son*, are fully expreſs'd. The only Debate is concerning the Divine Nature, which is ſtrongly declar'd in the Beginning of St. *John*'s Goſpel, in theſe Words: *And the Word was God.* Which is expreſſed more clearly in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, (ſpeaking of *Chriſt*) *For in Him dwelleth all the Fulneſs of the Godhead* Bodily. And in St. *John*'s Goſpel, c. x. v. 38. *Chriſt* ſays, *That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me.* From whence it is evident, That the Divine Nature in Chriſt, is, *viz.* The * *One God.* By this we are to find how we are to underſtand the Expreſſion, *And the Word was God.* The *Man*, *Jeſus*, with whom the Apoſtles converſed, cou'd not (in a Literal Senſe) be term'd *God:* But, as Reaſon in Man, denominates Him a Rational Creature; ſo the *One God* dwelling in

* *That God was, in Chriſt, reconciling the World unto Himſelf.* 2 Cor. v. 19.

the

the *Son*, expreſſes his *Divinity*.——By the *Fourth Propoſition* it is proved, *That Supream Worſhip is only to be paid to the Supream Being, the one firſt Cauſe of all Things.* It is evident likewiſe, *That the Divine Nature in the Son, is the One God:* Therefore the *Worſhip*, which, in the Epiſtle to *Hebrews*, is aſcrib'd to the Son, *is to the Divine Nature in the Son, the One God dwelling in him*: ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων Θεὸς.

Eighth Propoſition.

THERE are not Three Divine Beings, Eſſences, *or* Subſtances *Perſons, in the ſame Senſe in which we commonly uſe the Word* PERSON, *to whom* Worſhip *is to be paid.*

Demonſtration.

BY the *Third Propoſition* there can be but *One Neceſſary Exiſtent Being.* By the Second *Corollary* to the ſaid Propoſition, *He is to be worſhipped.* By the Fourth, *Supream Worſhip is to be paid to the One Supream Being only.* Therefore there cannot be

be *Three Divine Beings, Eſſences, or Subſtances, Perſons, in the ſame Senſe we commonly uſe the Word*, Perſon, *to whom* Supream Worſhip *is to be paid.* Beſides this demonſtrative Certainty of the Truth of this Propoſition, it may with great Aſſurance be inſiſted on, becauſe it is agreeable to the *Athanaſian Creed*, which ſays, *Not Dividing the Subſtance*; and to the Firſt of the Thirty-nine *Articles.* This is likewiſe agreeable to what Dr. *Waterland*, and other Learned Divines ſay, *God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.* Therefore what is here advanc'd, is agreeable to the Doctrines of the *Church of England*, and the Judgment of the learned Defenders of it.

Eighth Definition.

IDOLATRY is a paying Divine Supream Worſhip to any, but the One Supream God.

Ninth Propoſition.

ADORATION of Father, Son, *and* Spirit, *as to* Three diſtinct Subſtances, Three diſtinct Perſons,

ſons, *in the Senſe which, in common Diſcourſe, we take* Perſon, *is* Idolatrous Worſhip.

Demonſtration.

By the Fourth Propoſition, *Supream Worſhip is only to be paid to the Supream Being*; and by the *Definition* of Idolatry, *a paying Divine Supream Worſhip to any but One Supream Being, is Idolatry:* Therefore, Adoration *to theſe, as diſtinct Subſtances, is* Idolatrous Worſhip.

Corollary.

From the foregoing *Propoſitions* this Truth may be collected: *That what ever we are neceſſarily required to give our Aſſent to, concerning Father, Son, and Spirit, is ſo far from entangling the Underſtanding with Difficulty and Perplexity, that it is demonſtrably evident.* Therefore the Terms *Perſon, Trinity,* and *Myſtery,* applied to *Father, Son,* and *Spirit,* or *Holy Ghoſt,* require Caution; that the Uſe of them may not lead any Perſon, unattentively, into falſe Conceptions, and Miſtakes of dan-

dangerous Conſequence.——Firſt, concerning *Perſon*, it is to be deſir'd, that Learned Divines may conſider, whether it is ſafe, or juſtifiable, to apply *Perſon* to the *Three*, in any other Manner than as the Scriptures have applied it to them: Concerning which it hath been truly affirm'd, that the *Scriptures* ſpeak of them *Perſonally*; and that they have *diſtinct* Actions and Characters aſcrib'd to them. But a very * *Learned and Pious Writer*, on the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, expreſſes himſelf in theſe Words: " I confeſs, I am not aware of any Text, " where any Term that expreſly ſignifies *Perſon*, " is applied to the Holy Spirit; or to the Divine " Nature of Chriſt, conſider'd apart from the " Man Jeſus." Our *Engliſh* Tranſlation of *Heb.* i. 3. ſays, *That the Son is the expreſs Image of his Father's Perſon:* But the *Greek* Word is ‖ *Hypoſtaſis*, which ſignifies *Subſtance*: And the fore-mention'd Author obſerves, " That ſome *Cri-* " *ticks* ſay it muſt rather ſignify *Subſtance*, than

* *Diſſertations* by *J. Watts*. Page 182 ſecond Part; Page 132 ſecond Part. *The Spirit of God is not a diſtinct Being from God Himſelf, or any other conſcious Mind.*

‖ χαρακτὴρ τ ὑποστάσεως αυτ.

" *Perſon*, in that Text, becauſe, in the Apoſtolick " Age, they think it was never us'd to expreſs " *Perſon*." It is very evident likewiſe, from the foregoing *Demonſtrations*, that there are not *Three Divine Perſons*, who are *Three different Beings, Eſſences*, or *Subſtances, in the ſame Senſe in which we commonly uſe the Word* Perſon, *to each of which Supream Worſhip is to be paid:* Since it is likewiſe demonſtrated, that uſing the Word *Perſon* in our *Adoration*, and at the ſame Time admitting an Apprehenſion of our addreſſing ourſelves to *Three diſtinct Subſtances*, may truly be ſaid to be *Idolatrous*.——It might admit of a moſt ſerious Conſideration, whether the Word *Perſon*, as apply'd to the *Three*, is *to be retain'd*: Or if it is, *How?* By publick Authority it may be explain'd in ſuch Manner, as may prevent any ſuch Miſtakes for the future.——If that was rightly explain'd, the Term, *Trinity*, which, perhaps, is no where found in *Scripture*, wou'd no longer be a Subject of Diſpute; and the Term, *Myſtery*, would truly be taken in a good Senſe, to contain the moſt ſublime and beneficial Truths; which, tho' not fully and clearly

clearly declared in the firſt Ages of the World, are made intelligible by the *Goſpel*; ſo far as is neceſſary for our Aſſent, or to have a due Influence on our Practice.

Poſtulate 2. THAT the *Fall* of our Firſt *Parents* be admitted.

Poſtulate 3. THAT very early a *Meſſiah* was promiſed.

Poſtulate 4. THAT after ſome Ages had paſſed, (about the Year of the World 4000) the promiſed *Meſſiah* came.

Poſtulate 5. That the exemplary Life and Doctrine of *Chriſt*, the *Meſſiah*; the Miracles he wrought; his meritorious Death, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, were inſtrumental in eſtabliſhing a true Faith, and promoting the Happineſs of all Mankind.

Tenth Propoſition.

THERE is One Mediator *between* God *and* Man; *the Man* Chriſt Jeſus; *who ſuffered Death upon the Croſs, for the Redemption of Mankind, and made by his one Oblation of Himſelf, once offer'd, a full, perfect, and ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World.*

Demonſtration.

By the Firſt Poſtulate, the *Divine Authority of the Scriptures* muſt be admitted; and ſeveral *Texts* prove the Truth of this *Propoſition*, particularly, *Rom.* viii. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all Things?* 2 Cor. v. 14. *For the Love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.* 15. *And that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe*

roſe again. Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.* Heb. ix. 13. *For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the Unclean, ſanctifieth to the Purifying of the Fleſh.* 14. *How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead Works to ſerve the living God?* 15. *And for this Cauſe he is the Mediator of the New Teſtament, that by Means of Death, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt Teſtament, they which are called might receive the Promiſe of Eternal Inheritance.* 28. *So Chriſt was once offered to bear the Sins of many; and unto them that look for him ſhall he appear the ſecond Time, without Sin, unto Salvation.* Pet. iii. 18. *For Chriſt alſo hath once ſuffered for Sins, the Juſt for the Unjuſt, (that he might bring us to God) being put to Death in the Fleſh, but quickened by the Spirit.* 1 Tim. ii. 5. *For there is One God, and One Mediator between God and Men, the Man*

Chriſt

Chriſt Jeſus. 1 Epiſtle of St. John ii. 2. *And he is the Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but alſo for the Sins of the whole World.* 2 Cor. v. 18. *And all Things are of God, who hath reconcil'd us to Himſelf, by Jeſus Chriſt.——In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveneſs of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.*

Ninth Definition.

DIVINE FAITH, *in the* largeſt Extent *of it, comprehends* all Chriſtian Virtues, *in the more* limited Senſe *of it; is* an Aſſent of the Judgment to Divine Truths, *given upon receiving ſufficient* Illuſtration *and* Evidence. *It muſt be an* Aſſent *of the Judgment, not meerly an* oral *Acknowledgment, or Acquieſcence, with what is impoſed by thoſe, in ſuperior Rank and Authority. It is* neceſſary *that we underſtand* what is affirmed, *or* denied, *in any* Propoſition, *which may be offered to us, before we can give our Aſſent to the Truth of it: If we cannot tell* what *is* affirmed, *or* denied *in any* Propoſition

poſition *offer'd to us, our Mind can neither give* Aſſent, *or* Diſſent, *concerning it; and muſt remain wholly ignorant about it: And we can neither be ſaid to* believe, *or* diſbelieve *it. The* Scriptures *contain* ALL NECESSARY ARTICLES OF FAITH: *They are ſuch as we may* underſtand; *and are ſo evidently true, that we may reaſonably give* Aſſent *to them. It is not required that we ſhould have an* adequate Idea *of the* Infinite Incomprehenſible Firſt Cauſe; *we may reaſon ſtrongly enough, for any pious Uſe required from us, concerning the* Object of our Worſhip.

IN Oppoſition to *Divine Faith, Hereſy* has been the Subject of Debates, which very much croud the Volumes of *Eccleſiaſtical Writers*; and have more perplex'd the World with Diſputes, than afford any juſt or intelligible Deciſion. Opinions have been aſſerted, and that which has been condemn'd for *Hereſy*, in one Age, has been declared *Orthodox* in another. This Inconvenience has riſen either from *Self-Intereſt*, or from neglecting to ſtate (in general) what *Hereſy* is; which ought to be fix'd, before any good Judgment can be given

given of any *Doctrine*, *for* or *againſt* it. It may be proper therefore to give a Definition of *Hereſy*.

Tenth Definition.

HERESY is the advancing ſome Doctrine, *which is contrary to ſome* Neceſſary Articles of Faith; *to which ſome, perhaps, may add the Words,* Wilfully *and* Knowingly.

To remove all Difficulties from this *Definition*, it will be neceſſary to give a *Definition* or *Deſcription* of ſuch ARTICLES, AS ARE MOST EVIDENTLY NECESSARY.

Eleventh Definition

NECESSARY ARTICLES OF FAITH *are ſuch, as either* Religion in general, *or ſuch as the* Chriſtian Religion *is founded upon*; *or ſuch as are* NECESSARY for promoting true Adoration, *and Devotion*; *or for promoting Virtues, either* Divine, Human, *or* Social.

THE

THE *Doctrines* concerning the *Trinity*, which in this Age, are moſt chiefly complain'd of, as being *Heretical*, are thoſe of *Arius*, *Socinus*, and *Sabellius*.

SOCINUS ſaid, There was a *Time* when *Chriſt was not*.

ARIUS ſaid, There was a *Duration* when He *was not*.

SABELLIUS is ſaid to affirm, That *Three Perſons* in the *Trinity* had *no Diſtinction*, but were *all one*; as the *Body*, *Soul*, and *Spirit* make *One Man*.——It may be proper to have theſe *Doctrines* examin'd, by a *Rule* drawn from the foregoing *Definitions*; and by that Means, it may be clearly diſcerned, whether *they do*, or *do not*, deſerve the Cenſure of *Hereſy*.

THE Firſt of them, unleſs it is ſpoken of the *Incarnation*, is manifeſtly an Error: It being undeniably evident, that *Chriſt exiſted before the World*. For St. *Paul* ſays, *God created all Things*

by Jeſus Chriſt. And St. *John* ſays, *By Him all Things were made, and without Him, nothing was made, that was made.*——No Chriſtian ſure, in this Age, is chargeable with a Diſbelief of this.

THE Second requires a larger Examination; and the Queſtion is, Whether there was a *Duration*, in which the *Logos*, or *Word*, *was not?*——Previous to the Deciſſion of this, it muſt be premiſed, that the Term, *Word*, has two Significations: * The one is the promiſed *Meſſias*, who was exiſtent *before the Creation*; the *Firſt-born of every Creature*; who prayed, ſaying, *Glorify thou me, with thine own ſelf, with the Glory I had with thee, before the World was.* In this Senſe, *he was with God.*—— The other *Signification* of the Word, is the *Divine Power*, or *Spirit*, which *deſcended* into *Jeſus*: In this Senſe the Word is *God.*

BY this double Signification of the *Term*, *Logos*, (or *Word*,) the ſeeming Contradiction, in the firſt

* See Arch-Biſhop *Tillotſon's* Sermons, (Folio) 43 Serm. Page 324.

Verſe

Verſe of St. *John*'s Goſpel, *viz. with God*, which denotes *Diverſity*; and the ſaying He is God which expreſſes *Identity*, may be reconciled. And from hence a Solution of this Queſtion may be collected: For in the Firſt Signification, there was a *Duration*, in which he did *Not Exiſt*; in the Latter, he did *Eternally Exiſt*.

By this *Diſtinction*, the Contenders *for* and *againſt* the *Doctrine* of *Arius*, may be reconciled; and muſt ſee the Neceſſity of finding a Solution, to the Appearance of a Contradiction, which could perhaps be no other Way explain'd, than by this *Diſtinction*.

The Neceſſity of a Solution will moſt manifeſtly appear, when we conſider, that on one Hand the Divineſt Attributes are, in *Scripture*, aſcribed to the *Logos*, (or *Word*,) Divineſt Operations and Worſhip. It is ſaid by him, *I and my Father are One*. And in the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, *Let all the Angels of God worſhip Him*. St. *John* ſays, *By Him all Things were made*. On the other Hand, it is as undeniably true, that a *Subordination* of the

Son, or *Word*, to the *Father*, is as plainly expreſs'd in theſe Words, * *My Father is greater than I.* The *Apoſtle* ſays, *He is the Firſt-born of every Creature, Superior to Angels; for unto which of the Angels, ſaid he at any Time, thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* This undoubtedly denotes ſome Point of *Duration*, not *Eternal Exiſtence.*

THE foregoing *Diſtinction* removes all Difficulties, and the Appearance of Contradiction, in the above-named Terms of *Equality* and *Subordination:* For the *Man, Chriſt Jeſus*, is inferior to the *One God*; but the *One God dwelling in Him*, is the ſame *Eternal, Neceſſary, Exiſtent* Being, as was

* 2 Pet. i. 7. *For he received from God the Father, Honour and Glory; when there came forth a Voice to Him, from the Excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* A *Subordination* is very evident; and the *Subordination* is in the *Man, Chriſt Jeſus*, who is inferior to the *One God dwelling in Him.* It does not imply, that there is [illegible] *One Divine Being, Eſſence*, or *Subſtance*, which is *Inferior*, or *Subordinate* to another *Divine Being, Eſſence*, or *Subſtance.* St. *Athanaſius's Creed* ſays, *Not dividing the Subſtance, the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, is all One; and there are not Three Eternals.* 1 Cor. xi. 3. *But I would have you know, the Head of every Man is Chriſt, and the Woman is the Man, and the Head of Chriſt is God.* the head of

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in the *Voice* from Heaven, which denoted *Father*, by declaring, *This is my beloved Son.* It is more difficult to make a Judgment on the Doctrine of *Sabellius*; nor is it, perhaps, an eaſy Thing to diſtinguiſh the Difference between the Language of *Sabellius*, and the Expreſſions made Uſe of in our *Creeds*, and *Thirty-nine Articles*: In the Firſt of which *Articles* it is affirm'd, *That there is One God, without Body, or Parts; and in Unity of this Godhead* (which *Term*, ſtrictly ſpeaking, is an *Abſtract*) *there are Three Perſons of One Subſtance, Power*, and *Eternity.* It is not an eaſy Thing to ſee the Difference betwixt ſaying ſo, and affirming that that there are *Three Modes of Exiſtence.*

Mr. *Norris*, in his *Moral Eſſay on Love*, ſays, "The "Faculties of the Soul of Man afford a lively Image "of the Trinity;" which, tho' it is not wholly to be rejected, it may be thought too Metaphyſical a Subtilty, to be admitted, when we *worſhip.* It is much ſafer to keep ſtrictly to the *Scriptures*, making ſuch a Conſtruction of them, as will take away all Appearance of Contradiction; and then we ſhall not allow of Apprehenſions of there being *Three*

Divine

Divine Spiritual Beings, or *Subſtances*: But we ſhall be ready to ſay with the Apoſtle, *To God only wiſe, be Glory, thro' Jeſus Chriſt, for ever, Amen. The God of all Grace, who hath called us unto his Eternal Glory, thro' Chriſt Jeſus: To him be Glory, for ever, and ever, Amen. Grace be to us, and Peace from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Bleſſed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort. And this is Life Eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Theſe laſt Words were ſpoke by *Jeſus Chriſt*; by which he acknowledges, that the *Father* is the only true *God*.——Dr. *Hammond*, in his *Paraphraſe* on this Text, ſays, " We are to acknow-" ledge *Jeſus* to be the only *true God* alſo;" and does not give any Salvo for this Contradiction; which, as it is an Addition of his own, he ought to have done, in Juſtification of himſelf, were it poſſible: But as it is a Miſconſtruction, he ſhould have been more careful to remove any Appearance of Contradiction in the *Scripture*: The foregoing Diſtinction will ſhew their Conſiſtancy.

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It may be proper, in this Place, to conſider the true Senſe and Meaning of the 5th and 6th Verſes of the 2d Chapter of the *Epiſtle* to the *Philippians*, *Let this Mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus; who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God.*——Dr. *Hammond* ſays, Μορφη ſignifies not only an *External* and *Accidental Form*; but 'tis taken alſo, in good Authors, for an *Internal Eſſential Form*, or *Being*; from whence he paraphraſes thus: "According "to the Example of *Chriſt*, who being truly *God*, "thought it no Incroachment to be equal with the "*Father*:"——A Paraphraſe very remarkably obſcure, and far from giving the Senſe of the *Text*. For if by *Father* he had meant the *One God*, then his Paraphraſe would have been to this Effect: *Chriſt being God, thought it no Incroachment to the equal with God*; in which, to guard againſt an abſurd Tautology, or inſignificant Repetition, he ſubſtitutes the Word *Father*: If by *Father* he meant a *Perſonality in the One God*, then his Meaning muſt be, that *One Perſonality*, viz. *The Son*, is equal to another *Perſonality* in the *One God*;

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One Diſtinction, or *Difference*, is equal to another *Diſtinction*, or *Difference*: For the Firſt of the Thirty-nine *Articles* affirms, that theſe *Perſonalities are not Parts*; therefore they muſt be underſtood there abſtractedly, as *Differences* only: How Satisfactory this Paraphraſe is, let any one judge. Dr. *Hammond* acknowledges, " That Μορφὴ is not " always taken for *Internal Eſſential Form*, or *Be-* " *ing*, but ſometimes *External* and *Accidental* " *Form*, as *Mark* xvi. 12, ſometimes an *Image* or " *Picture*, (as Μορφωσις ſeems to do, *Rom.* ii. 20. " " 2 *Tim.* iii. 5.) and is render'd by *Heſychius* " χηματισμος εικων, a *Perſonation*, or *Image*.

It is very probable, this latter is the Senſe of Μορφὴ Θεοῦ, or agreeable thereto, as it is expreſſed, 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. *Chriſt, who is the Image of God*, ὁς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ, Mr. *Pool* terms it *Symbolum Preſentiæ unius Dei*. The ſame is expreſs'd, *Col.* i. 15. εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου. And in the ſame Epiſtle it is ſaid, For in *From Him dwelleth the Fullneſs of the Godhead bodily* σωματικῶς. " God (ſays Dr. *Hammond*) is " ſaid to dwell in his Saints, in ſome Degree only; " But

" But in Chriſt, he dwells in Fullneſs." This is agreeable to what is ſaid by St. *John*, and what Chriſt ſays of Himſelf: *My Father is in Me.* And I ſuppoſe no one will ſay, there is in Him, any other *Divine Nature*, but the *Father*, the *One God.* If in the Text Μορφὴ had been apply'd to the *Divine Nature* only, it might have been taken for *Internal, Eſſential Form*, or *Being*; but as it is ſpoke of *Chriſt*, it muſt be underſtood *otherwiſe:* That he is the *Symbol* of the *Divine Preſence*; or, in the Apoſtle's Language, the *Image of God.* And as Reaſon in Man denominates Him a Rational Creature; ſo, tho' *Chriſt* cou'd not (in a literal Senſe) be term'd *God*, conſidering his *Human Nature only*; yet the *One only God dwelling in Him*, expreſſes his Divinity: And it may be truly ſaid, in the Language of St. *John*, *The Word was God.* The Intent and Meaning of the 5th and 6th Verſe, of the 2d Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, may be to this Effect: *Let this Mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*: Whoſe Human Nature is acknowledg'd: *Who being the Symbol of the Divine Nature, or Preſence, and the One God dwelling in him, he thought it was not Preſumption to have*

Divinity aſcrib'd to him.——This I may reaſonably conjecture to be the true Senſe and Meaning of the Text. For a further Confirmation of this; we may obſerve what St. *John* ſays, in the 10th Chapter of his Goſpel, and the 36th Verſe: *Say ye of him,* (ſays our Saviour) *whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent into the World, Thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe I ſaid, I am the Son of God?* 37. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not.* 38. *But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the Works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.*—And in the Verſes before this, *viz.* 35th and 36th. *If he called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent into the World, Thou blaſphemeſt; becauſe I ſaid, I am the Son of God?*

THIS Paſſage is a Confirmation of the aforeſaid Conjecture, concerning the true Meaning of the Expreſſions, *Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*; and explains the true *Divinity* of our *Saviour.*——This is conſiſtent with

with the foregoing Demonſtrations; and is exactly conformable to the *Nature*, *End*, and *Deſign* of the *Chriſtian Religion:* It may be aſſiſting in directing our Worſhip, right, and may prevent our having ſuch erroneous Apprehenſions of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, as would miſlead us into *falſe Worſhip:* To which, very probably, many (for Want of due Attention) are expoſed; as they muſt unavoidably be, if, with thoſe *Three different Terms*, they admit of a Conception, that they are *Three different Divine Spiritual Subſtances.*——I dare ſay, it ought ingeniouſly to be confeſs'd, by moſt, who make Uſe of the *Three Firſt Petitions* in our *Litany:* That Ideas of *Three Divine Spiritual Beings*, are too apt to croud into their Thoughts; though, upon mature Conſideration, they reject 'em, as inconſiſtent in Nature and Reaſon, and contrary to the real Sentiments of all Chriſtians, in the ſeveral Ages, ſince the Nativity of our Saviour.

In Confirmation of this Aſſertion, it may not be improper to ſet down, in this Place, the Opinion of *Fathers*, as they are collected by Dr. *Waterland.*

JUSTIN MARTYR declares the *Son* is not *another God*; at the ſame Time acknowledges the *Son* to be *God*.——*A. D.* 146.

ATHENAGORAS makes the *Father and Son One God*.——*A. D.* 177.

THEOPHILUS ſays, *Father* and *Son* are *One God*, and have *One Dominion*.——*A. D.* 181.

IRENÆUS makes the *Father* and *Son One God*.——*A. D.* 187.

CLEMENS, of *Alexandria*, makes *Father* and *Son One God*, of the whole Univerſe.——*A. D.* 194.

TERTULLIAN makes *Both* to be *One Subſtance*, and *One God*.——*A. D.* 200.

HIPPOLITUS makes both *One God*, conſequently *One Supream*.——*A. D.* 225.

ORIGEN aſſerts *Father* and *Son* to be *One God*.——*A. D.* 245.

CYPRIAN

CYPRIAN includes all the *Three Perſons* in *One God.*——*A. D.* 250.

NOVATIAN maintains *Unity of Subſtance.* ——*A. D.* 257.

DYONISIUS, of *Alexandria*, includes all *Three Perſons* in the *Moned*, or *One God.*——— *A. D.* 259.

LACTANTIUS makes *Father* and *Son*, *One God*, likewiſe *One Subſtance.*——*A. D.* 318.

CYRIL, of *Jeruſalem*, ſays, the *Father* hath not *One Glory*, and the *Son another*, but *One* and the *Same.*——*A. D.* 348.

ALL theſe agree in One Opinion, That there is only *One Divine Being*, *Eſſence*, or *Subſtance.*

FINIS.

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